

Appl. No. 10/797,420
Amdt. dated 20 November 2007
Reply to final office action of 11 January 2007

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Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An internal safety structure for toasters comprising a circuit board, a motor, and a lifting rack and a heating wire, which is characterized in that the motor is a low voltage direct current motor which drives the lifting rack to move upwards or downwards through a set of gears, a set of clutch gears and a driving gear bar; on the circuit board, an upper sensor and a lower sensor are installed to sense the a lifting level of the lifting rack; on the circuit board, there is an integrated circuit which contains custom software to preset operation and control programs; on the circuit board, a transformer is installed to reduce the voltage of an alternating current, which supplies power to the circuit board and the motor through a set of diode rectifiers changing the alternating current to direct current; the driving gear bar is connected to the lifting rack securely.

Claim 2 (original) An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1, wherein the set of gears comprises an endless screw which connects and rotates with the motor, and two or more straight-tooth gears which are intermeshed with one another and mesh and rotate with the motor; and one side of the straight-tooth gears meshes with the set of clutch gears.

Claim 3 (previously presented): An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1 or 2, wherein the set of clutch gears comprises a transmission shaft and a clutch straight-tooth gear, a clutch spring and two or more intermeshed clutch gears which are installed on the transmission shaft; one side of the clutch gears meshes with the straight-tooth gear; one side of the clutch straight-tooth gear meshes with the driving gear bar; when the motor rotates, the set of gears drives a first clutch gear in the set of clutch gears to rotate; the rotating clutch gear is pushed by the tension which is created by the clutch spring towards a second clutch gear and drives it to rotate; the second clutch gear drives the clutch straight-tooth gear to rotate through the transmission shaft; the clutch straight-tooth gear drives the driving gear bar to move upwards or downwards; when the lifting rack is out of order and becomes immovable, the driving gear bar cannot move upwards or downwards and so the clutch straight-tooth gear and the second clutch gear cannot rotate smoothly; when the first clutch gear is driven to rotate by the motor and the set of gears, the first clutch gear compresses the clutch spring and moves away from the second clutch gear; the first clutch gear and the second clutch gear skid at a point of contact, thus releasing the driving force generated by the rotation of the motor.

Claim 4 (cancelled)

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Claim 5 (original) An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1, wherein the lifting rack has a latch disposed in a position corresponding to the upper sensor and the lower sensor; when the lifting rack ascends to a horizontal position corresponding to that of the upper sensor, the latch contacts the upper sensor and the upper sensor immediately sends electrical signals to the circuit board; the preset programs of the integrated circuit of the circuit board control the motor to stop rotating; the lifting rack is then stopped from ascending continuously; when the lifting rack descends to a horizontal position corresponding to that of the lower sensor, the latch contacts the lower sensor and the lower sensor then immediately sends electrical signals to the circuit board; the preset programs of the integrated circuit of the circuit board control the motor to stop rotating; the lifting rack is then stopped from descending continuously.

Claim 6 (currently amended): An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1 or 4, wherein one side of the lifting rack connects to a holder placed inside the toaster's slots and ~~the other side~~ another side of the lifting rack is connected to the driving gear bar; the upward or downward movements of the driving gear bar drive the lifting rack to move upwards or downwards accordingly; the lifting rack drives slices of bread on the holder to move upwards or downwards accordingly.

Claim 7 (previously presented): An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1, wherein the integrated circuit of the circuit board contains custom software to preset timing for the programs; it automatically cuts off power supply to the motor after the expiration of a preset time limit, so as to stop the motor from rotating continuously; the preset time limit is 5 to 30 seconds.

Claim 8 (currently amended) An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1, wherein a relay is used as a switch to supply power to the a heating wire; the relay is electrically connected to a power source, the circuit board and the heating wire respectively, and is operated and controlled by the preset programs of the integrated circuit of the circuit board; upon completion of the preset programs, power supply to the relay is automatically cut off and the relay immediately cuts off power supply to the heating wire; when the descending procedure of the lifting rack functions improperly, the lower sensor does not send any electrical signal to the circuit board, and the circuit board does not supply power to the relay and so the relay does not switch on the heating wire.

Claim 9 (previously presented): An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1, wherein the circuit board contains a set of specially designed circuits which controls in a manner that when any fault, abnormality or overheating occurs in the timing or circuit programs of the circuit board, the circuit board sends instructions to cut off power supply to the heating wire.

Claim 10 (original): An internal safety structure for toasters as in claim 1 or 2, wherein the motor, the set of gears and the set of clutch gears are disposed inside a substantially enclosed casing;

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the casing is placed on one side of the circuit board; the casing encloses the noise generated by the rotation of the motor, the set of gears and the set of clutch gears.

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Arguments:

Regarding the claim rejections under 35 USC 112, I have amended the claims as mentioned above in order to clarify the invention.

Regarding your rejections under 35 USC 102 against Claim 1 in view of the Arnedo patent (US6,655,262) and the Birkert patent (US5,044,263), I have amended Claim 1 as mentioned above. The amended Claim 1 incorporates features in the original Claim 4 which has not been rejected.

I would also like to point out the fact that a corresponding UK patent application in respect of the subject application has been granted by the UK Patent Office on 12 July 2006. A copy of the cover page of the granted UK patent is attached for your information. I respectfully hope that you could allow the application for grant under the revised set of claims.

Respectively submitted,

By Applicant:



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